AN APPEALE ON TRVTHS BEHALF.

OVr opositeſ after much & long ſtrugling (as wilde creatures taken in the ſnare) perceiving neither freind, nor forreiners know how to yeeld them any relief, (though they crept baſely for it) being yet ſet to hold it out, truth fayling them, now they unconſcionably invent ſlanders, hoping after ſo long time paſt, they may now boldly change the cauſes of our difference, & ſay *we were caſt out for ſeducers, & for attempting to lead them to idolatry, & ſo all we have publiſhed is no other then lyes, which they now threaten to manifeſt to all the world*; boaſting now before all, *they are able to make good their proceedings againſt us before God and men*: yet hitherto all know they have ever ſhunned to come to tryall with us before anie, or to take others adviſe for common good as this letter manifeſts, where alſo contrary to their ſaying, is confirmed, that they cenſured us, for not acknowledging intrapping demaunds, for Chriſts government, and a lawfull peacable meeting, for faction.

The judgment of the Church of Leyden upon the preſent differences occaſioned by our oppoſites themſelves.

To our beloved, the Elders and church at Amſterdam, grace and peace from God the giver therof, and in him our reſalutations.

WEe received your letter brethren, but not anſwering either our expectation, or the the weightines of the buſines in hand: & are withall rather driven to gather your meaning out of it, then finding the ſame in it expreſſed, Onely we ſee plainely your intent of imputing ſpecial blame to one by you accounted the chief adverſary, as offring, boaſtingly (*as you ſay*) to prove, that he doth worſhip the God

of his fathers in writing a letter in oppoſition to the Churches agreement, &c. And in rebellious refuſing and deſpiſing of the ſame church. *Firſt touching the perſon intended by you; It ſhould not ſeeme ſtrange to any, if he were moſt forward, who was deeplyeſt intereſſed in the buſines; and that ſo far as his church-eſtate and membership muſt neceſſarily ſtand, or fall with that covenant impugned by you, as the brāch with the root. As* Zilpah *was not, nor could be rightfully* Leahs handmaide, *except ſhee had been Labans firſt rightfully,* Gen. 29. 24. *by whoſe gift ſhee was tranſmitted, and conveied unto him; ſo neither could hee be truely a member there with you, but by tranſmiſſion, diſmiſſion or conveiance (call it as you will) from this Church to that, and ſo from that at London firſt to us here, by vertue of that firſt Covenant there made by profeſſion of faith. Which Covenant howſoever by ſome light perſon accounted* no better then the Turks might make, *was by the Churches both there and here alſo, in the time of thoſe worthy Governours, now at reſt in the Lord, eſteemed truly Chriſtian. The party intended by you, ſhould by your grounds not have been caſt out, but left out of the Church.*

And

And for the thinge by you imputed unto him; wee are certified by manie eie and eare witneſſes, that his ſpeech was as followeth. As Paul in his caſe, when he was accuſed unjuſtly ſaid, in the way they call hereſie worſhip I the God of my fathers: ſo haply I in this, that which you call & have cenſured for faction, or a factions action, tending to the breach & diviſion of the Church, I judge to be nothing leſſe, but rather a Chriſtiã duty, tending to love, and not to diviſion in the Church in the leaſt, either in action or intention. And if way may be given to ſpeake our mindes freely without interruption, (as hath been ſolemnly granted) it may and will ſo appeare, I doubt not to the hearts &c. *And that this ſpeech he uſed not till all hope was taken away of any moderate courſe of proceeding, or of other then by ſimple confeſſion of the ſin of faction. And ſurely brethren, it is not credible, that he would ſpeake* of the worſhipping of the God of his fathers; *or that any man indued with common ſence, would offer to prove unto others, that hee worſhiped God by that which he knew they eſteemed ſinfull and evill. If he had proved that he*

had so worshipped God, what else had it been but to have proved, that he had worshiped God by doing evil in their conscience with whom he had to doe? this had been an offer fit for him to make that meant to prove himself guilty, and so to perswade others, that he was, but not for him, who meant (as he did) to avow his innocency in the thing. Brethren let us be mindefull, as wee ought, that no relation of a cause, nor plea for or against it, can make either ours the better, or our adversaries the worse, in the eies of the supreame judge both of our persons, & judgments and all other our actions.

And wheras the course well begun and tending to pacification, was (as wee understand) interrupted and broken-off upon a ground taken from the course of not calling againe into question civill judgments once passed by the judg, according to right; let it not be grievous unto you, if we a little warne you of that dangerous foundation, upon which it seems you too much build your manner of proceeding in the Church. And to let passe, that it were more for the true peace of the judges of the world with God, though with some Diminution of their credits in the eies of vaine men, if they not onely revi-

sed

ſed, but often upon better information or adviſe, even reverſed their former ſentences. We pray you call to minde how greivous it was unto the body of you, and dangerous in it ſelf, when ſome, of place amongſt you a few yeares ſince would patterne the government of the Church now, by the government of the Elders in Iſrael, which is in truth to transforme a ſervice into a lordſhip. More ſpecially for the matter in hand. When the civill Iudg hath paſſed ſentence, and that execution is done accordingly, and that every one hath his due, there is an end of the matter: but in ſpirituall judgments there is a farther thing, which the magiſtrate meddles not with, the repentance of the cenſured to follow in time by Gods bleſſing. The end of Excomunication is not that the perſon might be excomunicated, but that repentance might follow; for the furthering whereof many things may and ought to be done in chriſtian diſcretion by the Church towards the excomunicated, as being as it were the Churches priſoner: 1 Cor. 5.5. *by which he and his* ſins are bound upon earth, *as our Lord teacheth* Math. 18.18. *And a larger extent of diſcretion this way, few caſes in an age, can perſwade to, then this in hand;*

consideringboth the ground, and carriage of the thing, and the number of the persons opposite; and with these, the interest of all other Churches in the busines. And now understanding, brethren, that competent satisfaction for the manner of the carriage hath been tendered by the parties censured: for the matter (to be reduced, (as we conceave) to these two heads following, we can doe no lesse in honour of the truth, discharge of our own consciences before God, & due respect unto them in their distressed state, then to signifie and professe. 1. That in a matter of meere counsaile and advise *(more then which, neither the Church of London required, nor you could afford them) any particular persons advised with, and having their reasons of difference from the Churches perswasion, may, and in cases of weight (such as this was ought) by speech or writing, as there is occasion, signify that their different judgment and advise to them whom it concerns: provided the same be done in good manner, and with due respect to the Church. Salomon saith* Prov. 11..14. *that* in the multitude of counsailers there is safety. *And every mans common sence teacheth, that he who propounds a thing to others for* counsaile, *would*

heare

heare every mans opinion, and the reason ther-of, for his help and direction. To deny this, is to deprive him of liberty that should give counsaile; and him of help that should receive it. The Church was not in this case to use authority, but to shew reason.

2. *That seeing both Moses in the law,* Deut. 19. 15. *& Christ in the Gospel* Mat. 18. 15. 16. 17. *ordayns, that* every matter should be established by two or three witnesses; *& that in that order* the church *should* be told, *or cõplained to,* of a brother; *for the officer to traduce, or complain of a brother to the church, without witnes of an offence done, & to proceed with him by questions, and Interrogatories tending to his prejudice, and trouble for well doing, in his conscience; and for the Church to censure him for refusing to answere such interrogatories so ministred, is both against* Moses *and* Christ, *and the* Law *of nature it self;* Act. 24. 8. 13. & 25. 5. 16. *which taught the wise of the heathen not to proceede in judgment with anie but by way of* accusation, *and* proofe *of evill against him. And these perswasions of the things, and defence of our own, and all other Christians, yea of all mens lawfull liberty, we are willing, & able by the grace of God to justify against all gainsaiers.*

And

And now brethren what shall we say more unto you? our & all other churches advise you reject, in confidence of your own unerring judgment, & proceeding in this matter.

In your letter you mention the great weaknes of the church. *Oh that you would indeed manifest such persuation of your selves. Then would you not proceed with that confidence in a matter & manner before unheard-of in the Churches, then would you both be glad of, and desire the advise & counsail of others, able & willing in the feare of the Almighty, & in a good conscience to afford you the best help they can; and not so carry things as* if the word of God either came frō you or unto you alone. *And for the church here which is nearliest united unto you; what other use have you had of us since the death of your wise & modest governors in al your differēces and troubles, save to help to bear part of that scandal & opprobry, wherwith specialy in the publique carriage of matters, you have ladē the ordinances of God, & professors of the same, in the eies of al within & without; but in vain we speak unto you whose eares prejudice hath stopped. We purpose not hencforth to trouble you any more in this kind; but taking part as occasiō is in the good things amōgst you, & professing our selves innocent of the things amis, wil bewail your state which is indeed to be bewailed; & comend it as we do to the Lord for bettering. His grace be with you alwaies more and more.*

Your loving brethren the Pastor &
church at Leyden.

IOHN ROBINSON. &c.

Leyden, September 18. 1624.